REMARKS

Claims 1-71 are pending in this application. The present claims were amended to conform to U.S. practice. New claim 71 was added. The specification has been amended to incorporate section headings. Applicant notes that claim 1 was previously amended under PCT Article 34. Accordingly, a copy of the amendment was communicated to the U.S. Receiving Office by the International Bureau. For the Examiner's convenience, a copy of the amendment filed with the IB is enclosed herewith as Appendix A.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added by virtue of these amendments.

Consideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
DAVIDSON, DAVIDSON & KAPPEL, LLC

By: _____
Cary S. Kappel
Reg. No. 36,561

DAVIDSON, DAVIDSON & KAPPEL, LLC
485 Seventh Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10018
(212) 736-1940

APPENDIX A

Chartered & European Patent Attorneys
Trade Mark Attorneys

Venner Shipley

Venner, Shipley LLP
20 Little Britain
London EC1A 7DH

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7600 4212
Facsimile: +44 (0)20 7600 4188

Email: mail@vennershipley.co.uk
www.vennershipley.co.uk

The European Patent Office
D-80298 München
Germany

13 May 2005

VIA FAX & MAIL
Dear Sirs,

International (PCT) Patent Application No. GB04/004416
Gyrohaler
Vectura Limited
Our ref: IMG/44825PCT1

We are filing herewith a Demand for International Preliminary Examination in connection with the above application together with an authorisation to debit the official fee from our deposit account.

In reply to the Written Opinion of the International Searching Authority, we file herewith a revised page 41 of the specification, showing claims nos. 1 to 6, to replace page 41 presently on file and an additional page 41a showing claim 7.

Claim 1 has been amended as explained below. All other claims remain unchanged.

Claim 1 now specifies that the inhaler comprises a housing to receive a *coiled strip* of blisters rather than a plurality and to recite that the actuator is operable to cause the coiled strip of blisters to *unwind* so as to sequentially move each blister into alignment with a blister piercing member. The claim also now specifies that the actuator *further comprises a mouthpiece* through which a dose of medicament is inhaled by a user, *the inhaler being configured such that, when a user pivots the actuator or causes it to pivot, together with the mouthpiece, relative to the housing and subsequently* inhales through the mouthpiece, an airflow through the blister is generated to entrain the dose contained therein and carry it out of the blister and via the mouthpiece into the user's airway.

In the Written Opinion, the Examiner objected to claim 1 on the grounds that it lacks novelty in view of the disclosure in GB-A-2 340 758 (D1). However, claim 1 as amended is considered to patentably distinguish the invention from the disclosure in this document as the actuator of the embodiment described on page 11, lines 2 to 16 and illustrated in Figures 7A, 7B, 8A and 8B is not pivotally mounted to the housing. Furthermore, the housing of the inhaler is not configured to receive a coiled strip of blisters that unwinds when the actuator is operated. On the contrary, as can be seen in Figures 8A and 8B, the housing is configured to receive only a short flat strip of blisters.

None of the remaining prior art documents cited in the Search Report are considered to be relevant to claim 1, as amended, either alone or in combination with D1.

An International Preliminary Examination Report is now awaited.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Grey
Authorised Representative

Claims

1. An inhaler comprising a housing to receive a coiled strip of blisters each having a puncturable lid and containing a dose of medicament for inhalation by a user, an actuator pivotally mounted to the housing operable to cause the coiled strip of blisters to unwind so as to sequentially move each blister into alignment with a blister piercing member, said actuator also being operable to cause the blister piercing member to puncture the lid of an aligned blister, the actuator further comprising a mouthpiece through which a dose of medicament is inhaled by a user, the inhaler being configured such that, when a user pivots the actuator or causes it to pivot, together with the mouthpiece, relative to the housing and then subsequently inhales through the mouthpiece, an airflow through the blister is generated to entrain the dose contained therein and carry it out of the blister and via the mouthpiece into the user's airway.

2. An inhaler according to claim 1, wherein the actuator is pivotally mounted to the housing.

3. An inhaler according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the actuator comprises an arm pivotally mounted to the housing at one end.

4. An inhaler according to claim 3, wherein the blister piercing member depends from one side of said arm positioned so as to extend through an aperture in the housing in a closed position, in which the arm lies substantially against the housing, to pierce the lid of a blister aligned with the blister piercing member.

5. An inhaler according to claim 3 or 4, wherein the piercing member comprises at least two discrete piercing heads operable to pierce a corresponding number of holes in a blister aligned with the blister piercing member.

6. An inhaler according to claim 5, wherein each piercing head comprises a primary cutting element and a pair of secondary cutting elements extending laterally across each end of the primary cutting element.

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7. An inhaler according to claim 6, wherein the primary cutting element and the secondary cutting elements each have a pointed tip, the tip of the primary cutting element extending beyond the tips of each of the secondary cutting elements.

Claims

1. An inhaler comprising a housing to receive a coiled strip of blisters each having a puncturable lid and containing a dose of medicament for inhalation by a user, an actuator pivotally mounted to the housing operable to cause the coiled strip of blisters to unwind so as to sequentially move each blister into alignment with a blister piercing member, said actuator also being operable to cause the blister piercing member to puncture the lid of an aligned blister, the actuator further comprising a mouthpiece through which a dose of medicament is inhaled by a user, the inhaler being configured such that, when a user pivots the actuator or causes it to pivot, together with the mouthpiece, relative to the housing and then subsequently inhales through the mouthpiece, an airflow through the blister is generated to entrain the dose contained therein and carry it out of the blister and via the mouthpiece into the user's airway.

2. An inhaler according to claim 1, wherein the actuator is pivotally mounted to the housing.

3. An inhaler according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the actuator comprises an arm pivotally mounted to the housing at one end.

4. An inhaler according to claim 3, wherein the blister piercing member depends from one side of said arm positioned so as to extend through an aperture in the housing in a closed position, in which the arm lies substantially against the housing, to pierce the lid of a blister aligned with the blister piercing member.

5. An inhaler according to claim 3 or 4, wherein the piercing member comprises at least two discrete piercing heads operable to pierce a corresponding number of holes in a blister aligned with the blister piercing member.

6. An inhaler according to claim 5, wherein each piercing head comprises a primary cutting element and a pair of secondary cutting elements extending laterally across each end of the primary cutting element.

7. An inhaler according to claim 6, wherein the primary cutting element and the secondary cutting elements each have a pointed tip, the tip of the primary cutting element extending beyond the tips of each of the secondary cutting elements.